

## Pioneers of Marion County. Chapters XIII-XIV

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ence and patriotism which have caused him formerly to be denounced in the place of his nativity, by his fire-eating relatives, as an *abolitionist*, and more recently by the extremists of the dominant party as a *conservative*, he is now canvassing his district as an independent candidate for congress.

In person, General Edwards is of medium size, warm and genial in manner, with a pleasing cast of features, which, we regret to say, is not well portrayed in the engraving. He has a number of children, some of whom are happily married and settled in life. It is to his son, E. E. Edwards, of Chariton, Lucas county, and to his son-in-law, Dr. H. H. Maynard, of Tipton, formerly a surgeon of the eighteenth Iowa, but now the leading physician of Cedar county, that we are indebted for most of the facts relating to General Edwards's private life contained in this sketch.

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## PIONEERS OF MARION COUNTY.

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BY WM. M. DONNELL.

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(Continued from page 253.)

## CHAPTER XIII.

LIST OF COUNTY TREASURERS. — THE STANFIELD DEFALCATION.  
— ROBBERY OF THE TREASURY IN 1867.

The following is a list of county treasurers from the organization of the county till the present date, — 1870 : —

David T. Durham, elected September, 1845 ; re-elected August, 1846, and served till August, 1847. Isaac Walters, from August, 1847, to 1849, and re-elected from that until 1851. Claiborn Hall, 1852 and 1853. David Stanfield, 1854, 1855, 1856, and 1857. William Ellis, 1858, 1859, 1860, and

1861. A. H. Vierson, 1862 and 1863. Emery F. Sperry, 1864 and 1865; during the last year of which term Edwin Baker served. William T. Cunningham, 1866 and 1867. Edwin Baker, 1868, 1869, 1870, and 1871.

During this period the treasury suffered twice from robbery; the first time by defalcation at the close of Stanfield's second term; and the second time by burglary, during the second year of Cunningham's term. The history of the first is briefly as follows:—

At the August election, in 1847, Mr. Stanfield, being a candidate for a third term, was defeated, and his successor (as the custom then was) entered upon the discharge of the duties of his office as soon as the result of the election was known; and on settling up the affairs of the office a default of \$4,546.20 was discovered. So soon as this discovery was made he was arrested, and an indictment was found against him at the September term of the District Court. Upon this, judgment was rendered against him and his securities for the amount. Of this amount, his assignee, C. G. Brobst, paid into the treasury in cash, notes, and judgment \$2,206.93, leaving a balance of \$2,339.27 due the county.

Mr. Stanfield seemed profoundly ignorant of the manner in which the loss occurred, and persistently denied his participation in it; and, as the affair was, to some extent, a mystery, many persons doubted his guilt, and some even believed him entirely innocent. It was for some time a subject of a severe partizan warfare of words, in which the *Journal* and *Standard* participated vigorously, firing weekly volleys of hot shot into each other's camp, without, however, gaining any apparent advantage for either side.

In October of the same year, Mr. Stanfield moved to Kansas, where, late in the fall, or during the winter, he was followed and visited by Dr. Patterson and James Walters, who on their return, reported that they had found him living in almost extreme poverty, apparently confirming the truth of his plea of innocence. In consequence of these facts, no attempt was made to prosecute the case further; and, in 1867

in response to a petition of a majority of the citizens of the county, the board of supervisors released the bondsmen of David<sup>V</sup> Stanfield from their liability, thus finally ending the trouble.

The second robbery was one of much greater magnitude, and proved a total loss. It occurred on Saturday night of February 9th, 1867, or very early on the following morning, but was not discovered till about 8 o'clock, when it produced a sensation quite unusual for the time and place.

It was known that the treasury contained a large sum, and it was at first supposed that it had all been taken, and exciting stories of the robbery,—the manner in which it was effected, and the magnitude of the loss,—were verbally reported through the county before the facts were fully ascertained. For a detailed account of the affair, we quote the following from the *Marion County Republican*, of February 12, 1867:—

“On Saturday night last, the office of the county treasurer, at the court house, in this place, was entered and robbed of all the money in it, which amounted to over forty thousand dollars. The burglars, in the first place, broke into Mr. Reed’s blacksmith shop and helped themselves to all the tools they required. They entered the treasurer’s office through a window that was very insecurely fastened. By the side of the door of the vault they removed a few bricks, which enabled them, with the aid of a cold chisel, to reach the bolt and drive it back, thus opening the door. The safe in the vault was purchased during the last year, for sixteen hundred dollars. The burglars broke the knob off the door of the safe, cut into the lock, opened the door, and took the funds. The most that was taken belonged to the school fund of the county. Mr. Dan<sup>V</sup> Smick, of Knoxville, loses over \$1,600, which he had placed there for safety. A portion of the funds was owned by the state.

“The robbery was discovered about 8 o'clock Sunday morning, and caused a great deal of excitement among our citizens all day long, hundreds visiting the court house.

Prompt action was taken to find the robbers. Different persons were sent out to spread the news and place officers of the law on the watch. As it was impossible for the scoundrels to take the benefit of the railroad until yesterday, we trust they may be speedily overhauled, and the stolen funds recovered.

"The board of supervisors was called together yesterday."

The following additional particulars we quote from the same article:—

"The knob was first knocked off, then a portion of the chilled iron under it cut out. Heavy blows were next struck exactly in the right place to loosen the bolts or break the fastenings, so heavy as to break the steel facing of the sledge used. Both of these operations, which we have imperfectly described, had the effect to loosen the bolts. Chisels were then used to pry open the door, which, unfortunately, was accomplished. The burglar, or burglars, seemed to know just what was requisite to do in order to accomplish their object. The one who made the safe could not have gone to work more scientifically, or with a better understanding of what was necessary to be done."

After a more critical examination of the amount taken, the losses of the various funds were found to be as follows:—

School Fund.....	\$20,000 00
State " .....	3,600 83
County " .....	2,100 50
Bridge " .....	3,300 48
Poor House Fund.....	2,276 74
Insane Fund.....	1,193 26

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Making a total of.....\$32,471 81

As some circumstances connected with the robbery seemed to indicate the treasurer's connection with it, the board ordered his arrest, employed an attorney for the county, and sent to New York for a detective to examine the safe, and make such discoveries as might lead to the arrest of the robbers.

A preliminary examination of Mr. Cunningham's case came off during this called session of the board; and, as some of the evidence seemed to lead to his conviction, his case was left for the investigation of the grand jury for the March term of the district court.

On the arrival of a detective, the safe was closely examined, and the work upon it was pronounced by him not to have been that of a scientific burglar. It appeared that the strokes of the sledge must have been made after the door of the safe was open, for the bolts were shot out as when locked, and had been rendered quite immovable by the blows that had damaged the combination, so that it could not be shut. Ten thousand dollars were offered as a reward for the arrest of the robbers and the recovery of the money, but no clue to the whereabouts of either could be obtained.

In the meantime, some parties had employed a young man who claimed to have been an army detective, to ferret the matter out. Actuated by a hope of the large reward, he secured the arrest of a man named William D'Armond, who had been a citizen of Knoxville for a short time, and had moved to ——— county soon after the robbery. Mr. D'Armond was brought to Knoxville and then sent to the Oskaloosa jail for a few weeks, to await his trial. The trial was had before Justice Kenedy, in Knoxville, and occupied about two days. M. V. Bennett was for the state, and G. B. Atherton for the defense, by both of whom the case was warmly contested; but the trial resulted in the acquittal of D'Armond.

A bill was found against Mr. Cunningham at the March term, whereupon he took a change of *venue* to Monroe county. Here, however, the state failed to get its witnesses at the time set for trial and the case was discontinued. After this, the board employed attorneys to investigate the matter, and sue on the bonds for whatever amount they supposed they could sustain an action upon. But, after investigating, they came to the conclusion that the evidence against Mr. C. was not sufficient to justify an attempt at prosecution. So the case was finally dismissed.

The great loss sustained by the county in this affair, together with the expenses of employing detectives, attorneys, the purchase of a new safe, &c., proved quite embarrassing for a time. It was at first thought advisable to issue bonds and obtain a loan for the benefit of those funds that were in the most pressing demand, particularly the school and bridge. But this was not done. Warrants were paid on claims on which the county paid interest, and many of these were bought by speculators at a profitable discount. In due time, however, by strict economy, and promptness in the payment of taxes, the finances of the county so far improved as to bring her warrants to par before three years, and the whole machinery is now in as flourishing a condition as it was before the robbery.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

HISTORY OF THE PRESS IN MARION COUNTY.—PELLA GAZETTE.

—KNOXVILLE JOURNAL.—DEMOCRATIC STANDARD.—PELLA WEEKLY BLADE. — MARION COUNTY REPUBLICAN. — PELLA BLADE.—MARION COUNTY DEMOCRAT.—PELLA GAZETTE.—IOWA VOTER.—COPPERHEAD.

Between the years 1847 and 1855 the population of the county was greatly increased by immigration from all parts of the east and south, and a large majority of those who had established permanent homes within her limits were men and women of intelligence and enterprise, if not of great wealth. Farms were made on every prairie, and almost every grove resounded with the stroke of the ax. Here and there the neat frame dwelling was beginning to take the place of the rude log cabin, and yearly expanding fields of corn and wheat, and numerous orchards of all stages of growth, from the lately planted scion, to the young fruit brearer, all betokened the husbandman's thrift, and promised him ultimate wealth. Villages were laid out in all parts of the county, and many of

the most needed manufactories were established in and about them, with merchandise to exchange for the products of the soil. Saw and grist mills were sufficiently numerous to be comparatively convenient to the inhabitants of all parts of the county; and these were yearly increasing in number and enlarging in capacity, as the increasing demands of the county seemed to require. Even at that early period a railroad and river navigation (one or both) were confidently expected. The Des Moines Valley Road, though yet distant, both in time and space, was talked of as a fixed fact, the arrival of which would be the beginning of a new era in the history of the county, as an avenue of trade and means of speedy correspondence with the east. How completely this hope has been realized within the last few years, the people know better than we can express it. And we must not omit to notice that, from the earliest period of our county history, the important matter of education was not neglected. In the midst of the toils, difficulties, and inconveniences of pioneer life, school districts were organized in every settlement of a sufficient number of children, a claim-pen (if one could be had), used for a school house, or a cabin hastily erected for the purpose, and a teacher selected from among the more capable members of the community. With such houses, such teachers, and such books as the country could afford, schools were maintained till greater conveniences came along with all the other advantages that are the natural result of growth in population and wealth.

But, so late as 1854 and 1855, one of the great levers of commerce and general intelligence was lacking in Marion county. In the midst of all these evidences of advancement the need of a local newspaper must have been felt. This need was, in a measure, supplied by the publication of the *Pella Gazette*, early in 1855.

Early in the autumn of 1854, Edwin H. Grant, a practical printer, came from the east to Pella, and entered into co-partnership with Henry P. Scholte, for the purpose of publishing a weekly newspaper in that town. They immediately set



about making the necessary preparations. A press and type were purchased, a building suitable for a newspaper office erected, and a list of subscribers obtained. At length, after a delay of several months after the enterprise was first announced to the public, the first number of the *Pella Gazette*, the first newspaper printed in the county, appeared under date of February 1, 1855; and it was, just at that time, the most western paper published in Iowa before reaching the Missouri river. The *Des Moines Star*, published at Ft. Des Moines, had suspended operations just previously.

The *Gazette* was a large sheet, seven columns to the page, beautifully printed from new type, of a size rather smaller than is generally used for a country paper. The leading editorial was a lengthy article by Mr. Scholte, consisting mostly of a brief history of the Holland Colony. In an article headed "Defining our Position," Mr. Grant said:—

"It is not our intention to remain silent upon the great political questions of the day. But we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not intend to give a blind credence to the machinations of any of the parties now dominant. We shall boldly avow our sentiments respecting any of the great movements of the age, regardless of political bias. Whenever we can consistently approve of any acts performed by either party, which seem to us to be calculated to benefit our state, or the great national confederacy, we shall cordially lend our influence to sustain and promote such measures."

In his address "To the Public," in the same issue, the same writer added:—

"The difficulties and expense which have attended us in reaching this position can hardly be appreciated by any one unacquainted with the business, and with the difficulties incident to a new country."

Like most pioneers, the *Gazette* began with a small list of subscribers, and but few of these paid in advance. Evidently, but few persons wished to risk their money in an enterprise of this kind till they could be assured of its success. Notwithstanding this, the paper held its own for several years, grad-

ually increasing its patronage along with its more recent competitors. Mr. Grant continued his connection with the *Gazette* till some time in 1857 or 1858, after which the paper was suspended for some length of time. In the summer or fall of 1859 it was resuscitated by S. M. Hammond, published by him in quarto form, and edited by Mr. Scholte, as a campaign paper. From November till March, 1860, it was published by Hammond & Hannold, when it was finally discontinued, and the subscription list transferred to the *Knoxville Journal*.

On the first of October, 1855, just eight months after the *Gazette* was started, the first number of the *Knoxville Journal* was issued by Wm. M. Stone (since governor of Iowa), as editor and proprietor. The press upon which it was printed was that of the old *Valley Whig*, published at Keokuk.

The *Journal* was published in the interest of the republican party, but devoted much of its space to the interests of Knoxville and the surrounding country. The first few numbers contained some valuable historical matter relating to the county, all of which was, unfortunately, lost\* on the night of 4th of March, 1856, when the office was burned. The office was in a frame building that stood on the north side of the public square, nearly opposite where the court house now stands. It and all its contents were entirely destroyed, together with a store adjoining it on the east.

The *Journal* was not renewed till some time during the next fall or winter, when Geo. W. Edwards, once editor of the *Burlington Hawkeye*, came to Knoxville in quest of a location for a paper. Being in possession of a press and type, he and Stone formed a co-partnership and renewed the *Journal*. During the same year Stone sold his interest in the paper to Edwards, who conducted it alone for a short time, till he sold it to John M. Bailey, and he to E. G. Stanfield, in the winter of 1857 and 1858. During Mr. Stanfield's proprietorship of the concern, the *Journal* was, for a time, edited

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\*It is a matter of regret to the author that he was unable, after extensive advertising and diligent inquiry, to procure one of these old papers.

by L. D. Ingersoll, since well known as an author, and at present editor of the *Chicago Post*. After Ingersoll, it was published by Bigelow & Co.; then, in 1860, by Horner & Hannold, who changed the name of the paper to *Marion County Republican*, some time during the same year.

The third paper published in the county was the *Democratic Standard*,\* first issued in June, 1856, about eight months later than the *Journal*, by Claiborn Hall, editor and proprietor. Mr. Hall, not being a practical printer, and also entirely unacquainted with journalism, soon found it "up-hill" work, and, financially, a "losing game" to publish a frontier country newspaper. So, after a short experience, he disposed of the concern to a company. After this, the *Standard* was edited and published by different individuals successively, among whom were S. M. Hammond and M. V. B. Bennett, the latter well known as a lawyer and political stumper. It finally suspended operations some time in 1864 or 1865.

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\*Like the *Journal*, no early numbers of this paper are extant, or, at least, could not be found, and its history must, therefore, be brief.

(To be continued.)

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